

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-11. (Cancelled)

12-15. (Cancelled)

16. (Previously presented) An article, including instructions residing on a computer-readable medium, the instructions causing a computer to:

receive discovery data collected from a plurality of network devices by a first plurality of discovery agents registered during installation;

receive discovery data collected from a network device by an additional discovery agent registered during an upgrade;

aggregate discovery data collected from a second plurality of discovery agents, the second plurality of discovery agents including the first plurality of discovery agents and the additional discovery agent;

generate a relationship file characterizing relationships among network devices identified by the second plurality of discovery agents;

coalesce the discovery data in a software file comprising a discovery document, said discovery data including two or more duplicate data entries; and
remove all but one of the duplicate data entries from the discovery document.

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Currently amended) The article of claim 16, wherein the instructions that cause the computer to receive discovery data comprise instructions that cause the computer to call said second plurality of discovery agents from ~~[[the]]~~ an agent directory.

19. (Previously presented) The article of claim 16, wherein the instructions that cause the computer to aggregate said data comprise instructions that cause the computer to call aggregator agents listed in an agent directory.

20. (Previously presented) The article of claim 16, wherein the agent directory comprises a plurality of Extensible Markup Language (XML) files.

21. (Previously Presented) The article of claim 16, wherein the instructions that cause the computer to remove the

second duplicate data entry comprise instructions that cause the computer to:

identify two or more agents responsible for generating the two or more duplicate data entries, each agent having a priority value;

compare the priority values of the two or more agents;

identify a first agent having a highest priority, said first agent responsible for generating a first duplicate data entry in the two or more duplicate data entries; and

remove all but the first duplicate data entry.

22. (Original) The article of claim 21, wherein the two or more agents are discovery agents.

23. (Original) The article of claim 21, wherein the two or more agents are aggregator agents.

24. (Original) The article of claim 16, wherein the discovery document is an Extensible Markup Language (XML) file.

25. (Previously presented) The article of claim 16, wherein the instructions that cause the computer to receive discovery data comprise instructions that cause the computer to receive discovery data collected from a plurality of network devices by said second plurality of discovery agents.

26. (Previously Presented) The article of claim 25,
further comprising instructions that cause the computer to:
store the discovery document in a discovery database;
and
generate a key for each discovered network device in
the discovery document.

27-30. (Cancelled)